

Throughout my career I have taken steps to not only ensure increased EAS funding, but to ensure on-time regularly scheduled air service is a priority for small communities, as well as large communities.

My March 8, 2010, letter to the U.S. Government Accountability Office, with signed support from Chairman OBERSTAR and Subcommittee Chairman COSTELLO, requests an investigation into delays and cancellations in small communities. This request initiates the process of narrowing down what changes we can make to increase air service reliability at our rural airports. The FAA Air Transportation Modernization and Safety Improvement Act renews our commitment to the Essential Air Service program.

As the Representative elected nearly 34 years ago by the great people of southern West Virginia, I know just how crucial EAS is to the survival of many rural airports.

The last FAA reauthorization bill made the Small Community Air Service Development, SCASD, Program a permanent program and increased authorized EAS funding to ensure the continuation of air service for rural businesses and residents that otherwise would find local air service too expensive.

This bill today improves our commitment to rural communities, brings stability to rural air service and encourages small communities to build relationships with air carriers that serve them. As importantly, this bill increases the authorized funding level for Essential Air Service, EAS, from \$127 million to \$200 million per year through FY 2012 and extends the Small Community Air Services Development, SCASD, program through FY 2012 at the current authorized funding level of \$35 million per year.

Airports have a vital role in our communities serving as both direct and indirect employers of our citizens—from the aircraft mechanics and airport managers who support the safety and on-time performance of flights, to the cooks and custodians who provide comfort and convenience for weary travelers.

Airports attract business development to communities and ensure local businesses remain robust and have opportunity for growth. For these reasons and more, businesses are drawn to those communities that can boast of a strong local airport.

To stay competitive in an ever-changing global marketplace, airports are constantly faced with pressures to modernize their operations. Often, local communities take it upon themselves to come up with the necessary funds and make improvements themselves. That is a crucial, and often difficult, goal.

Essential Air Service funding can make the difference between a community having access to aviation or not. The program has kept many airports operational and, in many cases, made lasting improvements to the services offered.

We must take it upon ourselves to do more to ensure that local airports, like the ones in my State of West Virginia, can continue to operate and provide much needed air service and jobs.

In closing, I just want to reiterate my strong belief that the EAS program provides rural areas with a vital link to our national air transportation system and promotes business development in our local communities.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the FAA Air Transportation Moderniza-

tion and Safety Act. This important legislation will modernize our air traffic control systems, improve safety, and protect passenger rights.

This bill will provide historic funding levels to improve airports, streamline operations, and update our air traffic control system to make it safer and more efficient. It strengthens air carrier oversight and revises training requirements to ensure that all the pilots in the cockpit have the most advanced certification. Finally, it provides vital consumer protections to make sure that when there are long delays on the tarmac, passengers have the option to leave the plane.

I hope my colleagues will join me to support this bill and that we move quickly to reconcile differences with the Senate and enact this much-needed legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of the motion will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR BANGLADESH'S RETURN TO DEMOCRACY

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1215) expressing support for Bangladesh's return to democracy, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1215

Whereas March 26 is the anniversary of Bangladesh's independence;

Whereas the Constitution of Bangladesh, ratified in 1972 following a war of independence, established a democracy ruled by and for the people of Bangladesh;

Whereas Bangladesh has a population of approximately 160,000,000 people, is the world's fourth most populated Muslim country, and is a moderate and democratic Muslim nation;

Whereas before elections in December 2008, Bangladesh held what the international community viewed as three free and fair elections in 1991, 1996, and 2001, respectively;

Whereas in October 2006, power was handed over to a caretaker government before the January 22, 2007, scheduled election and the caretaker government subsequently imposed a state of emergency on January 11, 2007;

Whereas the United States House of Representatives passed a resolution in September 2008 calling for the return of democracy in Bangladesh;

Whereas the caretaker government of Bangladesh returned the country to democracy through an election held on December 29, 2008;

Whereas the December 29, 2008, election was monitored by numerous international election observers that declared the election credible;

Whereas the United States Department of State welcomed "the success of Bangladesh's parliamentary elections" and congratulated the "Bangladesh Election Commission and the thousands of government officials involved in organizing this successful election";

Whereas the Awami League, led by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed, won over two-thirds of the 300 seats in Parliament and formed a new government in January 2009;

Whereas President Barack Obama awarded Muhammad Yunus the Presidential Medal of Freedom in August 2009;

Whereas the United States Agency for International Development reports that 49 percent of Bangladeshis live below the poverty line;

Whereas Bangladesh's economy grew at an estimated rate of 5.7 percent in 2009;

Whereas the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh has commenced serious efforts to address corruption; and

Whereas Bangladesh's long-term political stability and economic progress are critical to the security of the South Asian region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its strong support for the people of Bangladesh;

(2) encourages the strengthening and consolidation of democracy in Bangladesh one year after the election;

(3) urges the Government of Bangladesh to work together with all political leaders to continue and deepen reconciliation;

(4) appreciates the Government of Bangladesh for making progress in meeting the selection criteria of the Millennium Challenge Corporation;

(5) urges the Government of Bangladesh to protect the rights of religious and ethnic minorities in Bangladesh, including the Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, Ahmadis, and non-Muslim tribal peoples;

(6) urges the Anti-Corruption Commission in Bangladesh to continue its efforts to eradicate corruption;

(7) urges the Secretary of State to coordinate with Bangladesh on matters pertaining to security, economic progress, and human rights in South Asia; and

(8) encourages the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to continue supporting the building of a strong civil society and eradicating poverty in Bangladesh.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. CROWLEY. I yield myself such time as I may consume.